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the more common variety of Fr. *a* in page. It would be more natural and more logical that the common symbol *a* should represent the very frequently occurring sound, front *a* as in page, while the comparatively rare symbol Greek alpha ( $\alpha$ ) should represent the less frequently occurring back *a* in *passe*, about as in the Michaelis-Passy, or exactly if  $\alpha$  of the *Primer* can be considered as Passy's *a*. I quite agree with the class. It must be remembered in this comparison, then, that when in any given word, which is transcribed in each system, the symbols for the Fr. *a* sound are alike, that is, either *a* and *a* or  $\alpha$  and  $\alpha$ , the sounds in each word in the two systems are *different*; and when the symbols for the Fr. *a* are *different*, that is, *a* and *a* or  $\alpha$  and *a*, the sounds in the two systems are *alike*. Thus in the *Primer*,<sup>9</sup> we have *vya:r*=voir, M.-P. *vwa:r*; *teritwa:r*=territoire, M.-P. *teritwa:r*; *nywa:r*=noir, M.-P. *nwa:r*; in each of which three cases the *a* in question in the *Primer* is of the less common variety or Fr. back *a*, while in the M.-P. pronunciation, it is of the commoner variety, or strictly speaking, phonetically *front a* in distinction to the former sound *back a*. On the same page we have *rua* (*vya* should have been printed),=roi, M.-P. *rwa*, where again the vowel sound in the two systems is different; but in the form for moi=*mya*, M.-P. *mwa*, the vowel sounds in each case are identical. In addition to the criticism made by the class in regard to the use of the Greek  $\alpha$ , another has since been made to me by a Professor of Romance Languages at a neighboring university who kindly looked over some of our work, to the effect that there is something to be said in favor of the æsthetic side of typography and that the needless introduction of the Greek  $\alpha$  mars an otherwise pretty text.

Another symbol which the class criticised, and rightly too, I believe, was the one for the so-called *e* mute, or the *e* which is not mute ( $\epsilon$ ). It is a less effective symbol than the M.-P. inverted *z*, because it is so easily confused with  $\epsilon$ , the symbol for the open sound in Fr. *tête*.

Coming now to page 1, the alphabet, the letters are given and their names thus: *a* (*a*); *b* (*bé*), *c* (*cé*), *d* (*dé*), *e* (*é*), *f* (*effe*), *g* (*gé*), *h* (*ache*), etc., just as in the past they have been

<sup>9</sup> P. 28.

given in most grammars. It seems to me, however, that as it is now customary to name the letters by their sounds in the word that is spelled, the consonants being pronounced with the so-called *e* mute following, it is eminently appropriate to mention that fact in a treatise on pronunciation. It would appear, too, if one may venture in this connection a criticism on the M.-P. dictionary, that the letters of the alphabet be treated as words might have been, as in the H.-D. dictionary, where both the old and the new pronunciation of the letters are indicated; but M.-P. do not give sound equivalents for them in the body of the dictionary, and one's information on that point is only to be had on page 319, where over the table appears: "Chaque lettre doit se prononcer comme la lettre italique du mot mis en regard."

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#### ANGLO-SAXON READER.

*Anglo-Saxon Prose Reader for Beginners in Oldest English.* Prepared with Grammar, Notes, and Vocabulary. By W. M. BASKERVILL, Ph.D., and JAMES A. HARRISON, LL.D., L.H.D. New York: A. S. Barnes & Company, 1898. 12mo, pp. vi+176.

THE purpose and spirit of this book for "beginners in Oldest English" is good, and in a later edition it may easily be worked out so as to become its own justification. But as the volume stands, it shows signs of hurry in parts, as if rushed through to be ready for the autumn school-trade.

The volume can become useful to those schools and colleges where the time given to the course in English, and particularly in English linguistics, is necessarily limited, and the desire is to present as practical a knowledge of forms and principles of the "Oldest English," with ability to translate, in as short a time as possible. It may, perhaps, be contended, from this point of view, that the standard Anglo-Saxon Readers like Sweet's and Bright's contain more material than can be made use of in the time at disposal, and that an elementary work, guided by judgment, may prove better adapted to these particular needs. Some such plea may be urged, and it

is a little surprising that the editors nowhere make this avowal. Their aims seem hardly clear to themselves. They seem to be more ambitious, without quite marking definitely the limits of their own intentions. The result is, their work is not so successful as it ought to be, and can become. A revision for a second edition will probably bring out more distinctly the aims and limits of the work, will produce a more practical presentation of the subject having perfect regard to the means and ends involved, and will prove of real service to many pupils who are "beginners in Oldest English."

It is with the purpose of urging this future edition that the following points are raised.

Here is the statement in the Preface:

"The editors have had in view several things: first, the supply of new and fresh elementary *prose* texts for the use of students and teachers desirous of varying the Anglo-Saxon primers and readers now before the public; second, a more complete and practical presentation of working forms in the grammar proper. Along with these items of fresh texts and more detailed grammatical treatment, it seemed appropriate to associate an elementary Syntax and a few Notes, giving explanations and references where these seemed necessary, but leaving to a full Vocabulary more explicit information on particular points."

It is somewhat misleading to emphasize the "new and fresh" texts: fifty-seven pages of the book are devoted to Grammar, forty-five to Texts, twelve to Notes on the Texts, fifty-eight to the Vocabulary. The latter portion of the Texts, as giving those pieces adapted for the advanced reading, is necessarily the more important in any book of extracts. Of the forty-five pages of Texts (pp. 59-104), the final twenty-eight consist of the three well-known pieces: the Voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan, pp. 76-81; the Legend of St. Andrew, pp. 81-92; and the Reign of King Alfred (from the Chronicle), pp. 92-103. These are all in Bright's Reader, save about five of the eleven and a half pages taken from the Chronicle; that is, fully one half of the Texts are already in Bright's book. Farther, somewhat more than four pages (The Lord's Prayer, Luke xi, 1-4; The Sower, Luke viii, 4-8; and the whole of Luke ii) are taken from Bright's Gospel of St. Luke, accessible to many who use this

with Bright's Reader, to acquaint them with a larger amount of easy reading. The remainder of the Texts consists of a paragraph of Short Passages, taken from miscellaneous sources; of Matthew vi, 26-33; Genesis ii, 7-25, iii, and xxvii; Exodus xx; and of four pages from the Old English version of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (Miller's edition, pp. 30-34 and 56-60).

The emphasis on prose and the exclusion of all poetry is perhaps ill-advised. Old English as literature, as the medium of interpreting the spirit and life of our 'Earliest English' ancestors, found its truest and final expression in its verse; and however brief the course, the pupil who is merely carried through the forms and the syntax of prose—oftentimes a very formless thing—and has obtained no glimmer of what this apparently crude instrument was capable of in its enraptured poetic expression, has very possibly received an entirely false conception of the character and genius of that which he has gone to much pains to acquire. The intellectual pleasure of having a knowledge of Old English forms and of being able to trace certain words down to their present form and meaning is worth a good deal, but it does not make up for the loss of the other. The spirit of Sweet's and Bright's Readers in including some verse after an acquaintance with prose, seems the only true one, even for a book not intended to cover the ground those readers were designed for.

The assertion, "a more complete and practical presentation of working forms in the grammar proper," involves almost a contradiction. The effort to be "more complete" than is demanded for the pupil's clear understanding of the accompanying Texts (the proportion of fifty-seven to forty-five pages could perhaps without loss be reversed), renders the grammar less "practical." In the Phonology dialectal forms find a place in remarks when there is no demand for them in the Texts. Condensation and omissions would here be an advantage. Cook's Siever's *Grammar* is referred to in several places making the assumption the stronger that the grammatical introduction is not intended to be final, but merely serviceable for "beginners." Take an instance: *sleacnes* (p. 10) is "a rare excep-

tion," but is nowhere associated with the following Texts. On the other hand, a special form like that (on p. 11) of *mihte* (earlier *meahte*) ought to receive the emphasis it does, as both in the Texts and of frequent occurrence.

The Brief Syntax is a happy feature, and would be still further improved by illustrations of each principle taken from the Texts, as suggested for the Phonology.

But the great need of the Grammatical Outline, for beginners particularly, is the rhetorical (and mechanical) device of spacing, or massing, so as to catch the eye. It is uninviting to see paragraph after paragraph of small type filling pages on phonological changes and grammatical forms. The matter seems hard and uninteresting even before reading a page; and the editors are right in believing that it ought not to be hard. A better system of spacing, therefore, and the use of large type for essentials, and of smaller type for explanations and remarks on exceptions and peculiar forms, would add greatly to the mechanical execution and appearance. With the condensation and omissions indicated above, no more space would be needed for the material. Bright's "Outline of Grammar" accompanying his *Reader*, is, in its mechanical form, apart from other grounds, a model.

Some special points in the Grammar seem worthy of note.

Page 1. The statement "modern literary or standard English is more directly traceable to the Mercian," as expressed, may lead to a misinterpretation. It was the growth and importance of London at a much later time than the Anglo-Saxon period and the influences in and about London—and among these not the least was that Chaucer was a London child—that ultimately made Modern English.

Page 2. *ē* and *o* are used in the Phonology as distinguished from *e* and *o*, but not in the Texts. This seems to be a loss in definiteness, and may be confusing to the beginner in applying the principles of Phonology.

Page 2 has a slip making a loosely constructed sentence:

"The determination of vowel-length has been arrived at by careful investigation, and particularly by comparison with the cognate Germanic dialects."

This "and" does not connect co-ordinates.

Section 5. Pronunciation. Pages 3-5. "*ē=a* in *glade*: *hēlan*, *heal*; before *r=ai* in *air*: *wēron*, *were*." Is the difference so great, and does *glade* best reproduce this sound of *ē*? "*y=i* in *miller* (with lips rounded): *wyl-len*, *woolen*. *ȳ=ee* is *green* (with lips rounded): *brȳd*, *bride*." These are intended merely as practical rules, but they are not scientific. Likewise the statement that the second element (of a diphthong) is so obscured that only a sound like *-uh* is heard, is merely approximate. With palatal vowels *c* is given "as *k* in *kind*,"—but *kind* is apt to be pronounced differently by students in the same class.

It is doubtful whether that which is unscientific is ever really practical. In any discussion of pronunciation we shall ultimately have to agree upon some system of designation like Sweet's or Passy's (note a recent book for beginners by A. W. Burt on *Elementary Phonetics*), and teach pupils the elements at least of phonetic principles and of distinctions in sounds. This practise would at once eliminate remarks like the one quoted with approval from Wyatt's *Old English Grammar* as to "the practice of many teachers," confessedly inaccurate "that the beginner adopt one value for each letter, giving *g* the sound of *g* in *get* everywhere." Similarly, remark 2 on page 4, seems even to cast doubt on the importance of distinguishing between closed and open vowels, which has so far been put into practice, as stated, in not making the usual distinctions between *e* and *ē*, *o* and *o*, in the Texts.

Page 7. Exceptions to the law of breaking occur in the Texts, but no remark is made as to these.

Page 8. Naturally a few signs of quantity have been left off by the printers: *\*haljan*=*\*hāljan*; *\*dali*=*dāli*; *\*hearjan*=*hēarjan*. Also p. 12 Goth. *sokjan*=*sōkjan*; p. 35 *begen*=*bēgen*. Again, p. 9 in *\*blowith*, *\*cumith*, *th* is used in Germanic forms, and the sign *ð* is employed in a Gothic word.

Page 9. The relation between *\*cuning* and *cyn* is not clearly designated.

Page 14 ff. In the inflection of Nouns the general masculine and neuter declension is called the *a*-declension, and the feminine the *ō*-

declension. It is unfortunate that the different books cannot agree, but inasmuch as Sievers is referred to as standard, it would be better to follow the system there laid down and generally adopted. The naming of a large number of illustrations under each declension is decidedly helpful, for beginners usually find it difficult at first to apply the distinctions of the different declensions. Would it not be still better to indicate the examples specifically from the Texts and Vocabulary, applying the rules practically?

The statement of rules involving principles is often very loose, leaving the principle obscured and even omitted. For instance, p. 16 Rem. 4.

"Words ending in a double consonant often lose one consonant in the nominative and accusative, but it remains in the oblique cases."

But the principle involved is one of final double consonants, and not a matter of case construction. The same thing is virtually repeated on page 21, Remark.

Again, page 25, Remark 3—"When the final consonant is lost, contraction takes place"—does not clearly bring out the circumstances of the contraction.

Similarly, page 38,—“When the Plural Pronoun follows the Verb . . . the form of the Verb is most frequently changed”—but how and why changed is not stated, merely left to be inferred from an example.

So, page 40, "Grammatical change" is very inadequately presented, and not at all explained.

Further, the statement as to the three classes of weak verbs is very brief, and nowhere is there a clear presentation of the *j*-presents in verbs.

Page 17. The form *hirde* is the one chosen in declining the noun, although it is the form *hyrde* that is found in the Texts, and *hierde* that is regarded as normal. So p. 19 *gifu*, though p. 11 in the Phonology *giefu* is declared normal. Similarly, under the Verb are p. 41 *gifan* and *gifen*, p. 42 *hlihhan*, and p. 56 *nillan* (*sic*), when only *nyllan* (*nellan*) is found. On the other hand p. 21 writes *gyrd*, p. 24 *nȳd*, and p. 33 employs the normal spelling, *ieldra*, *ieldest*, etc.

Page 18. Under *j*-stems in nouns, in speaking of "the gemination of the consonant," the exception of *r* should be noticed. Will beginners understand the true meaning of the remark: "For *e* the oldest *monuments* have *i*?"

Page 20. Abstract nouns in *-u* (*-o*), *-ðu* (*-ðo*) are classed with dissyllabic feminine *ō*-stems. It seems better to follow again the special classification in Sievers and others.

Page 21. "Taken into the *a*-declension," should be *ō*-declension, to be consistent.

Page 28. The attention given to the declension of Proper Nouns is praiseworthy and necessary for the understanding of the Texts; likewise the Notes refer explicitly to them; the more surprising, therefore, that the Vocabulary is negligent on this head.

Page 31. *hēa(h)*, Gen. *hēa(g)es*, etc. *g* is not explained.

Page 33. A superlative in *-ma -dema* (*sic*).

Pages 40-43. The fulness of examples so conspicuous in the case of nouns and weak verbs is strangely accompanied with an extreme paucity in the case of strong verbs, in the six classes and the reduplicated class. It is just here that the pupil needs help. To refer to Cook's Siever's for further examples is to beg the question. For instance, the numerous verbs of the Third Class with their peculiarities, are represented by four: *bindan*, *helpan*, *steorfan*, *bregdan*. These exemplify four types, true, but by no means illustrate all the phonological changes in this class that are apt to confront the beginner. This unexpected compression at certain points, side by side with expansion at others, without any special relation to the needs of the beginner in the use of the accompanying Texts, seems apparently to lack system.

Page 42. *hlihhan* has the form *hleahhen* given for its participle; marked wanting by Sievers.

Page 47. *Willan* is classed as a Preterite-Present verb, yet with the admission that it is "not strictly" so to be classed.

The table of Preterite-Present verbs is admirably presented to the eye. The classes under which they fall as "old strong preterites" could also be indicated.

The clearness and excellence of the type of

the Texts and the succinctness and value of the Notes on these, reveal the care bestowed by the editors upon this part of the work. The result is highly satisfactory, and it is easily seen that what the editors personally attended to is of the right standard; where the work was left to pupils and assistants who were not always trustworthy, as seems to be the case with the Vocabulary, negligence is exposed. For the Texts the sign of circumflex is used to indicate vowel length rather than the macron. *þ* seems to be used consistently wherever the sound is initial, elsewhere *ð*. As observed, the forms *ē* and *ǣ* are not distinguished; for example, in the well-known Voyage of Ohthere there is written: *ond, þonan, longe, mon, from, etc., and ðhthere, mehte, lengra, elna, erede, ettan, erian, meras, hergiad, stent, Dene, Engle, Sillende, etc.*

The indication of one or two signs of quantity seems to be omitted or is at fault: p. 60, 7 *dæghwæmtlican*=*lican*; 60, 23 *heofonlica*=*lica*; 69, 23 *heofonlices*=*lices*; 80, 11 *þæt*=*þæt*; 100, 27 *æweg*=*aweg*; 101, 3 *forbærndon*=*forbærndon*; 102, 3 *stælwyrdæ*=*stælwyrdæ*. Similarly 94, 3 *ædræfdon*=*ædræfdon*; 93, 32 *þær fore*=*þærfore*, as in Vocabulary; 101, 3 *ūpon*=*ūp on*.

Greater consistency seems to be needed in the treatment of proper nouns. *Sæfern* (p. 100) is used without sign of quantity in the Text; the Vocabulary gives it sometimes with and sometimes without the mark; Bright's text uses it throughout with this word, Sweet's omits it. There seems to be less excuse for omission in cases like 101, 33 *Lēgaceastre*; 101, 35 and 102, 6 *Cwælbryce*; 102, 15 *Swiðulf*; 102, 16 *Hrōfesceastre, Cēolmund*; 102, 18 *Hām-tūnscire*; 102, 19 *Ēadulf*, etc.

Far from being "full," the Vocabulary is faulty. Unfortunately, the worst case of negligence occurs in the paragraph intended to be read first by the beginner—that of Short Passages, p. 59:

L. 1 *On anginne*. Vocabulary says, "*Anginn*, see *Onginn*"—but there is no *onginn*. Similarly there is nothing corresponding to l. 4 *fōt-sceamel*; l. 5 *þrymsell*; l. 7 *tæhte*; l. 7 *man-cynne*; l. 9 *mēde*; l. 9 *geearnungum*; ll. 10, 11 *synnum*; l. 15 *rōde-hengene*; l. 16 *wæthreowan*; l. 18 *mægen-prymme*; l. 19 *underfengon*; l. 19 *tōgēanes*.

Not only these, but particular forms and spellings which might cause difficulty in the first attempt at reading, are not given under their respective words; for example, l. 2 *seofedān*, reduction of unaccented *o* to *e*; some third person singulars—l. 5 *ymbscind*, l. 6 *gesihð*, l. 8 *sylð*, l. 19 *cymð*. [True, the Notes refer to these verbal forms, but the Vocabulary as such remains defective.] L. 13 *mære*, not given separately, and under *micel* this particular form is not given.

The Vocabulary may be tested in two other places, page 72, the first 18 lines of the excerpt from Bede, and p. 93 the first complete page from the *Chronicle*.

Page 72, l. 7 *uncūð*, not in vocabulary.

L. 7 *oð ðæt*, not treated by vocabulary in conjunction. L. 8, *ððre naman* (also repeated l. 2 of the next page), an instrumental case worth mentioning under *nama*. Not every form need be named, but the characteristic ones ought to be mentioned, and preferably those occurring earlier. The different pieces seem to have been worked up detachedly, and hence many inconsistencies.

L. 13 *pā ialond*, the acc. pl. form unchanged is worth distinguishing from the nom. and acc. sg. on the same page. None of these is referred to, but a dat. sg. three pages beyond is given.

As with accent in the Texts, the treatment of Proper Nouns has in it a certain degree of irregularity. For page 72, *Breotene, Rōm-ānum, Cristes, Rōmware, Rōme* are inserted in the Vocabulary; but not *Orcadas, Claudie* with OE. endings, and not *Agusto, Nerōne*, Latin oblique cases; also, not *Gāius, Jūlius, Clandius, Uespassianus*, Latin nominative forms.

Page 93. L. 5 *unwisum*; not in Vocabulary.

L. 5 *pegne*; dat. sg. form not given, but nom. sg., nom. pl. and gen. pl. which occur later on pages 100, 102.

L. 27 *sigelede*; this particular form is not given, but *siglde* p. 76 is named.

L. 29 *gehorsudan*; this form is not given, but *gehorsoda* a few lines above is referred to.

The same treatment of Proper Nouns is observable as on page 72. The nominatives of *Rōme, Angelcynes, Miercna, Hreopedūne, Norðhymbre* (but not *Norðanhymbre* l. 24), *Peohtas, Grantebryce, Wesseaxna, Escan-*

*ceastre* are inserted in the Vocabulary; but not of *Burgræd*, *Sca Marian*, *Healfdene*, *Tinan*, *Stræclæd*, *Wælas*, *Godrum*, *Oscytel*, *Anwynd*, *Ælfred*, *Werham*, *Swanawic*, *Ceolwulfe*. These illustrations will serve to indicate the degree of inconsistency, which is apt to produce some confusion and worry. And all these things can be better managed in the Second Edition.

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### ENGLISH LITERATURE.

*William Shakespeare*, a Critical Study. By GEORGE BRANDES. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1898. 2 vols. 8vo.

NOT until his last page does Mr. Brandes state definitely the aim of his *William Shakespeare*. Here he says that the purpose of his book is "to declare and prove that Shakespeare was not thirty-six plays and a few poems jumbled together and read *pêle-mêle*, but a man who felt and thought, rejoiced and suffered, brooded, dreamed, and created."

So far as this statement goes, there is nothing especially new in Mr. Brandes's purpose. Biographers innumerable have taken this for their aim. Every earnest student of Shakespeare has sought to find the man in his plays, and has noted line after line that rings too sincerely not to phrase the writer's own belief. Brandes, however, goes beyond his words. Accepting in most instances the results of modern scholarship as regards the order of the plays, he elaborates his theory that each play reflects the mood of its author at the time when it was written. If we admit the truth of his implied premise that Shakespeare wrote only what was in harmony with his mood, then has the Danish scholar led the way to a rich mine of material for the higher biography of sequence of thoughts and feelings rather than of mere outward events.

In pursuit of support for his position, he describes the times of Shakespeare, and how they would probably affect such a man as he thinks him to be; he studies some of the prominent men of the day, and tells us how Shakespeare probably felt toward them; he discusses the plays, and pictures the mood in which the man "must" have been when he wrote them. His

plan is ingenious and worthy of a highly sympathetic imagination, but are we sure that we know Shakespeare well enough to pass infallible judgment on the effect that people and events would have upon him? Moreover, is it not arguing in a circle to assume this knowledge when we are avowedly in pursuit of acquaintance with him? And was it necessarily Shakespeare's mood that gave its tone to the play? Must we look upon the rollicking fun of the *Merry Wives of Windsor* as indicating a time of special merriment in the life of its author? Is it fair to argue, as does Brandes, that the successful dramatist felt his life to be in the sear and yellow leaf because he lays the scene of the *Tempest* in the autumn? or to infer "a sickly tendency to imbibe poison from everything" because he wrote *Troilus and Cressida*? How far the consummate skill of the artist, whose practical success depended upon being in harmony with the times, would allow personal feeling to control his pen, seems hardly a matter upon which we can pass unerring sentence.

One would hesitate before accusing our author of turning his judgment over into the hands of his imagination, but there is certainly a not infrequent flavor of the credulity of the middle ages in his readiness to accept analogy as proof. It is a little difficult to believe that Shakespeare chose Cleopatra as his subject because the lady of the sonnets was also of a dark complexion. It seems hardly proof positive of his having read Ariosto in the original solely because in *Othello* he uses the phrase, "in her prophetic fury," while Ariosto says in *Orlando Furioso*:

"Una donzella della terra d'Ilia,  
Ch'avea il furor profetico congiunto  
Con studio di gran tempo."

Again, Brandes's specially weighty argument in favor of Shakespeare's having visited Italy is that Jews were not allowed to reside in England; and though he admits in a footnote that there may have been a few, why is he so sure that "it is not probable that Shakespeare knew any of them," especially after making the statement that the "internal evidence of his writings" proves that he lived a Bohemian life? In like manner, he finds it "unreasonable" to doubt the old story of Shakespeare's poaching adventures. In one place he says,